

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1           1. (currently amended) A drum comprising a fixed  
2     cylindrical body ~~(1)~~ with perforated lateral surface  
3     surrounded by a holed roll ~~(4)~~ driven in rotation  
4     relative to the axis (0) of the cylindrical body ~~(1)~~,  
5     and means ~~(7)~~ intended to create a partial vacuum  
6     inside the body ~~(1)~~, characterized by a  
7     water-impermeable partition ~~(13, 14)~~ subdividing the  
8     interior of the body ~~(1)~~ into two compartments ~~(16, 17)~~  
9     delimited by the partition ~~(13, 14)~~ and respectively by  
10    a first ~~(15)~~ and a second portion of the lateral  
11    surface and both ~~(16, 17)~~ placed under partial vacuum  
12    by the means ~~(7)~~ intended to create same.

1           2. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in  
2     claim 1, characterized in that it is associated with a  
3     conveyor ~~(22)~~ tangential to the drum ~~(24)~~ at a point of  
4     contact and the first compartment ~~(16)~~ begins opposite  
5     the point of contact and ends opposite a point of the  
6     lateral surface downstream, in the direction of  
7     rotation of the sleeve ~~(4)~~, of the point of contact.

2  
1           3. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in  
2 claim 2, characterized in that the first compartment  
3 ~~(16)~~ extends over a sector of the body ~~(1)~~.

1           4. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in ~~one~~  
2 ~~of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, characterized by means  
3 specific to each compartment ~~(16, 17)~~ intended to  
4 create a partial vacuum.

1           5. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in ~~one~~  
2 ~~of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, characterized in that the  
3 ratio of the total area of the perforations, per unit  
4 of surface, to the area of the lateral surface on which  
5 they lie is greater for the first compartment ~~(16)~~ than  
6 for the second ~~(17)~~.

1           6. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in ~~one~~  
2 ~~of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, characterized by a  
3 pressurized water injector ~~(8, 9)~~ on the portion of the  
4 roll ~~(4)~~ which passes opposite the portion of the  
5 lateral surface of the compartment ~~(17)~~.

1           7. (currently amended) The drum as claimed in  
2 claim 6, characterized in that the water injector is

3 disposed angularly in a manner immediately adjacent to  
4 the first compartment ~~(26)~~.

1 8. (currently amended) A production unit for a  
2 nonwoven material, comprising a spunbond tower ~~(21)~~  
3 with conveyor ~~(22)~~ leading to a drum ~~(24)~~,  
4 characterized in that the drum is as defined in ~~the~~  
5 ~~preceding claims~~ claim 1.

1 9. (currently amended) The installation as  
2 claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the tower  
3 ~~(21)~~ conveyor ~~(22)~~ and the tangential conveyor are one  
4 and the same conveyor.

1 10. (currently amended) The installation as  
2 claimed in claim 8 ~~or 9~~, characterized in that the drum  
3 ~~(24)~~ is mounted directly downstream of the tower, that  
4 is to say without interposition of a device causing the  
5 drawing of the material.

1 11. (currently amended) A method of producing a  
2 nonwoven material, characterized in that an  
3 installation as claimed in ~~one of claims 8 to 10~~ claim  
4 8 is used and the speed of the tower conveyor ~~(22)~~

5 and/or of the tangential conveyor is greater than the  
6 linear speed of the drum ~~(24)~~.

1 12. (original) A nonwoven material, characterized  
2 in that the ratio of the breaking strength in the  
3 machine direction to that in the cross direction is  
4 less than 1.2 and in particular approximately 1.

1 13. (original) The nonwoven material as claimed  
2 in claim 12, characterized in that said ratio is less  
3 than 1.